

shoulder of the road or into the median in order to avoid contact or impact with another vehicle, debris in the roadway, a deer, a cow or another animal or even a large pothole. Unfortunately, when the driver attempts to re-enter the roadway, they often have difficulty in handling the vehicle and sometimes the rear end or back of the vehicle starts to swing sideways or perpendicular to the direction of travel. When this happens, the driver is no longer able to effectively control the vehicle and a rollover occurs when the vehicle trips on the gravel shoulder, grass in the median, a curb, a guardrail or even on the flat surface of a road or highway. When any vehicle containing passengers rolls over, serious injury and death can occur.

### What To Do!

Properly maintain your tires. Make sure your tires are properly inflated and the tread is not worn down. Worn tires can cause your van to slide sideways on wet or slippery pavement. Improper inflation can cause handling problems and can lead to catastrophic tire failures, such as blowouts. Therefore, check tire pressure and treadwear as prescribed by your safety instructions.

Drive cautiously on rural roads. Be particularly cautious on *curved* rural roads and maintain a safe speed to avoid running off the road.

Know what to do if your wheels drop off the roadway. If your wheels drop off the roadway, or pavement, *gradually reduce speed and steer back onto the roadway when it is safe to do so.*

When a 15-passenger van is not full, passengers should sit in seats that are in front of the rear axle.

More than 15 people should never be allowed to ride in a 15-passenger van.

Because a 15-passenger van is substantially longer and wider than a car, it: Requires more space and

additional reliance on the side-view mirrors for changing lanes

- Does not respond as well to abrupt steering maneuvers
- Requires additional braking time.

### Does an experienced driver make a difference?

According to the NTSHA the answer to this question is yes!

Significant differences in the design and handling characteristics of a 15-passenger van make it drive differently from other passenger vehicles. Therefore, an organization that owns a 15-passenger van should select one or two experienced drivers to drive the van on a regular basis. These drivers will gain valuable experience handling the van. This experience will help make each trip a safe one. Consistent cross training with other drivers will increase your driver pool to make your unit more effective.

### So??

Are these wonderful vans, trucks, and mini-vans deadly demons that we should run away from, screaming in terror ?

Of course not! But just like any machine that can be controlled by proper training, caution and common sense, we can utilize them to the utmost to fulfill our CAP mission. Enjoy them and be safe!



**THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER: LETS HEAR FROM YOU:  
SEND YOUR COMMENTS, TIPS AND IDEAS TO:  
Lt Col Wally Jaynes, CAP Deputy Director of Safety  
Pacific Region  
wallyjaynes@hawaiiantel.net**